

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 798

By Black

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of United States Army Staff Sergeant Joseph P. Bellavia.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, one such courageous Volunteer, Staff Sergeant Joseph P. Bellavia, a member of the 716th Military Police Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), United States Army, lost his life on October 16, 2003 in pursuit of freedom and democracy for the Iraqi people; and

WHEREAS, participating in negotiation attempts with a group of armed men breaking curfew in Karbala, Iraq, he was fatally wounded in an attempt to rescue his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Kim S. Orlando; the death of this sergeant is mourned by a grateful nation, fellow soldiers stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, friends, and family; and

WHEREAS, a native of Wakefield, Massachusetts and a graduate of Wakefield High School, Joseph Bellavia enlisted in the U.S. Army and took basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, before joining the military police protecting nuclear weapons in Nevada. He served in Germany for two years before joining the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky from which he was sent to South Korea to guard the demilitarized zone and was later deployed to Kuwait, becoming part of the invasion force into Iraq; and

WHEREAS, this dedicated soldier received two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart; and

WHEREAS, hailing from a lineage of soldiers, his grandfather served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, his father a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, and his stepmother is a U.S. Army reservist; and

WHEREAS, a highly respected member of the Clarksville community, SSG. Bellavia was deeply devoted to his family and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he will be dearly missed by his surviving family members and friends, including his wife, Christine, his father and stepmother, Joseph F. and Janet Bellavia, and his brothers, Christopher, Jonathan, and Paul; and

WHEREAS, this valiant Tennessean leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in military life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional soldier and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of United States Army Staff Sergeant Joseph P. Bellavia, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and dedication to this great nation and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of SSG. Bellavia.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.